

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for authenticating a user, comprising:  
obtaining an asserted identity of said user;  
5 presenting one or more questions to said user that said user has previously answered;  
and  
processing spoken answers to said one or more questions using an automatic speech  
recognition technique to determine if said spoken answer matches an answer obtained during an  
enrollment phase

10 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said processing step is performed until a  
predefined security threshold is satisfied.

15 3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said predefined security threshold is  
based on a sum of security weights of correctly answered questions.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of processing said  
answer using an utterance verification technique.

20 5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said processing step further comprises the  
step of converting said spoken answers to a textual form and comparing said textual form to  
answers obtained during an enrollment phase.

25 6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said processing step further comprises the  
step of obtaining a confidence score for a recognized version of said spoken answer.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said processing step further comprises the  
step of employing word spotting techniques to determine if said spoken answer matches an answer  
obtained during an enrollment phase.

8 (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said authentication is performed in  
connection with the resetting of a password of said user.

9 (Currently Amended) An apparatus for authenticating a user, comprising:  
5 a memory; and  
at least one processor, coupled to the memory, operative to:  
obtain an asserted identity of said user;  
present one or more questions to said user that said user has previously answered;

and

10 process spoken answers to said one or more questions using an automatic speech  
recognition technique to determine if said spoken answer matches an answer obtained during an  
enrollment phase.

11 (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said processor is further configured to  
15 process said spoken answers until a predefined security threshold is satisfied.

12 (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said predefined security threshold is  
based on a sum of security weights of correctly answered questions

20 13 (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said processor is further configured to  
process said answer using an utterance verification technique.

14 (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said processor is further configured to  
convert said spoken answers to a textual form and comparing said textual form to answers obtained  
25 during an enrollment phase.

15 (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said processor is further configured to  
obtain a confidence score for a recognized version of said spoken answer.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said processor is further configured to employ word spotting techniques to determine if said spoken answer matches an answer obtained during an enrollment phase.

5 16 (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture for authenticating a user, comprising a machine readable medium containing one or more programs which when executed implement the steps of:

obtaining an asserted identity of said user;

presenting one or more questions to said user that said user has previously answered;

10 and

processing spoken answers to said one or more questions using an automatic speech recognition technique to determine if said spoken answer matches an answer obtained during an enrollment phase.

15 17. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 16, further comprising the step of processing said answer using an utterance verification technique

18 (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 16, wherein said processing step further comprises the step of converting said spoken answers to a textual form and comparing said  
20 textual form to answers obtained during an enrollment phase.

19. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 16, wherein said processing step further comprises the step of obtaining a confidence score for a recognized version of said spoken answer.

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20. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 16, wherein said processing step further comprises the step of employing word spotting techniques to determine if said spoken answer matches an answer obtained during an enrollment phase.